

Message Text

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ACTION AF-08

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INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA
AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO
USIA WASHDC
COMSIXTHFLT
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GERMANY
CINCUSNAVEUR LONDON
CNO WASHDC
COMIDEASTFOR

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE NAIROBI 14049

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PFOR, MILI, KE, US
SUBJECT: U.S. FLY-BY ON KENYA NATIONAL DAY -- PUBLIC ASPECTS

1. TREATMENT IN KENYA MEDIA OF MOMBASA PORT VISIT OF
USS GUAM AND TWO ACCOMPANYING DESTROYERS RANGED FROM
CORDIAL TO ENTHUSIASTIC, BUT DID NOT MAKE U.S. INVOLVEMENT
THE CENTERPIECE OF INDEPENDENCE DAY COVERAGE.
EMPHASIS WAS ON CEREMONIAL ASPECTS OF VISIT/FLY-BY, WITH
NO SPECULATION WHATSOEVER REGARDING POLITICAL SIGNIFICANCE
OF THIS UNUSUAL PROJECTION OF U.S. AIRPOWER. GOK MAY
WELL HAVE CAUTIONED MEDIA NOT TO READ TOO MUCH INTO FLY-BY;
IN ANY EVENT, NOTHING HAS BEEN PUBLISHED WHICH COULD
OFFEND NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES. MODEST ADVANCE ANNOUNCEMENT
OF FLY-BY, LIVE RADIO AND TELEVISION COVERAGE, AND PRESENCE
OF PLANES OVERHEAD MADE MOST ORDINARY KENYANS AWARE OF
FLY-BY.

2. COVERAGE INCLUDED DECEMBER 11 NATION'S EXCELLENT
INSIDE-PAGE PHOTO OF USS GUAM WITH MEN ON DECK FORMING
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LETTERS "KENYA 76" (SUPPLIED BY USN PAO), FRONT-PAGE

PHOTO OF AIRCRAFT OVER JAMHURI PARK IN DECEMBER 13 NATION, INSIDE-PAGE PHOTO AND STORY OF SHIPS COMMANDING OFFICERS' CALLS IN MOMBASA IN DECEMBER 13 STANDARD, AND INSIDE-PAGE STORY WRITTEN ABOARD GUAM DURING AIR OPERATIONS IN DECEMBER 14 STANDARD. FLY-BY WAS INCLUDED IN OFFICIAL INDEPENDENCE DAY PROGRAM AS "FLY-PAST BY JOINT FORMATION OF KENYA AIR FORCE AND U.S. MARINE CORPS." PRESIDENT KENYATTA WAS OBVIOUSLY PLEASED WITH FLY-PAST, BUT DID NOT RPT NOT MENTION IT IN HIS SPEECH WHICH FOLLOWED IMMEDIATELY AFTER PLANES COMPLETED LAST PASS.

3. TWO AV-8 HARRIERS AND TWO CH-53 HELICOPTERS WERE ON DISPLAY AT EASTLEIGH AFB FOR THREE HOURS AFTER FLY-BY, BUT BASE WAS NOT OPEN TO PUBLIC. APPROXIMATELY 1000 PEOPLE WHO LIVE AT EASTLEIGH OR HAVE FRIENDS IN KAF WALKED THROUGH HELICOPTERS AND INSPECTED AV-8'S AT TOUCHING DISTANCE. COMMANDER OF KENYA ARMY MAJ. GENERAL JACKSON MULINGE AND AIR FORCE COMMANDER COL. DEDAN GICHURU CAME TO EASTLEIGH AFTER FESTIVITIES AT JAMHURI PARK WERE OVER. THEY VIEWED PLANES, WERE BRIEFED BY AV-8 SQUADRON COMMANDER, AND WERE EACH PRESENTED WITH SQUADRON SHIELD MOUNTED ON WOODEN PLAQUE. NO IMPORTANT CIVILIAN OFFICIALS IN NAIROBI VIEWED PLANES, SINCE THEY WERE ALL EXPECTED TO ATTEND PRESIDENT'S GARDEN PARTY DURING PERIOD OF DISPLAY. HOWEVER, LEADING OFFICIALS TOURED SHIP IN MOMBASA ON DECEMBER 11, AND A GROUP OF SEVERAL DOZEN KENYAN CIVILIANS AND MILITARY PERSONNEL WENT TO SEA ON USS GUAM FOR LAUNCHING AND RECOVERY OF PLANES DECEMBER 12.

4. EMBASSY WOULD BE INTERESTED IN ANY PRESS ATTENTION GIVEN TO FLY-BY IN OTHER AFRICAN COUNTRIES.

DECON 1/1/78.
MARSHALL

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